



## Health and safety – 5.5 Emergency Closure

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### Policy Statement

Certain situations, such as the failure of essential services (e.g., heating or water systems), building damage, fire outbreak, severe weather conditions, or an illness epidemic may make it necessary for our setting to close to ensure the safety of all. Planning for these situations is an important part of our policy on Health and Safety and Risk Management, and it is important that all staff, parents/carers and families are aware of the actions that will be taken should it become necessary to close unexpectedly.

Link to the local authority Emergency closure procedure can be found at:

<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/EmergencyClosureProcedureEYE.pdf>

Starlings Preschool Emergency Closure Policy to be read in conjunction with the Fire Evacuation Policy.

### Aims

- To ensure that children, parent/carers, families, visitors and staff members are always kept safe, and that we are prepared to respond to emergency situations in a planned and safe way.
- Outline steps to be taken in case of emergency closure to ensure good communication and orderly conduct, so that the welfare of children, staff and other individuals is maintained.



## **Procedures**

### **Severe Weather Conditions**

Should we have heavy snowfall / ice, which would make it hazardous for both staff and parents to travel, the setting will be closed. The Manager / Committee will contact all staff members before 7:30am to advise.

Parents will be notified via Starlings Preschool teachers to parents text message facility and the closed Facebook page. In addition, Starlings Preschool will notify the Local Authority who will publish all school closures. Ofsted will be notified on the day of closure.

Should severe weather occur during a session, staff will contact parents/carers to collect their children.

### **Failure of Essential Services**

This would cover, Gas, Electric or water. In the event of any essential services failure, the setting would close. The Manager / Committee will contact all staff members before 7:30am to advise.

Parents will be notified via Starlings Preschool teachers to parents text message facility and the closed Facebook page. Ofsted will be notified on the day of closure.

Should the failure of essential services occur during a session, staff will contact parents/carers to collect their children.

### **Building damage due to flood or fire outbreak**

In the event of building damage, where it is deemed unsafe for staff, children or visitors to enter the building, the setting will close, until we have been given confirmation and safety approval from the relevant associations for example: Hampshire Constabulary, Hampshire Fire Brigade, Hampshire County Council and Manor Field Infant School.

The Manager / Committee will contact all staff members before 7:30am to advise of the closure.

Parents will be notified via Starlings Preschool teachers to parents text message facility and the closed Facebook page. In addition, Starlings Preschool will notify the Local Authority who will publish all school closures. Ofsted will be notified on the day of closure.



Should building damage due to flood or fire outbreak occur during a session, Starlings Preschool staff will follow the Fire Evacuation Procedure and all children and staff will congregate at a safe location. Staff will contact parents/carers to collect their children.

### **Illness Epidemic**

Should Starlings Preschool be advised by the Local Authority of a serious illness outbreak, the setting will close. The Manager / Committee will contact all staff members before 7:30am to advise of the closure.

Parents will be notified via Starlings Preschool teachers to parents text message facility and the closed Facebook page. Starlings Preschool will notify Ofsted on the day of closure.

Should a serious illness outbreak occur during a session, staff will contact parents/carers to collect their children.

Before returning to the setting, it may be a requirement for a deep clean to take place, to ensure no traces of the illness are removed. Staff and parents/carers will be kept up to date on progress throughout the closure period.

In the event the setting re-opens for 'Key Workers' (as outlined by the Government), the staff will work to a new rota, as detailed by the Manager / Committee. Should there be staff shortages, Starlings Preschool will appeal to parents to keep their children at home, or find alternative childcare as outlined by the Local Authority. As a last resort the setting will close, as it would not be possible to maintain our staff/children ratios.

### **Payment of fees and wages**

In the event of an extended period of closure, the decision on the refund of any fees and payment of staff wages rests with the management committee and will be considered based on:

- The financial viability of such a plan and Starlings Preschools' on-going viability.
- Guidance from governing bodies such as SfYC, Ofsted, Acas.
- Retention and support of key staff.

Staff and families will be advised of our decision as soon as possible.



This policy was adopted by Starlings Preschool

On 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Date to be reviewed

Signed on behalf of the management committee

Name of signatory Tricia Hunt

Role of signatory Chairperson